

GIDDINGS TIMES & NEWS
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**Resolution on gas plant
talked about in meeting**

MTGP hopes county will oppose Blue location

A special meeting will be held by Lee County commissioners to consider a resolution by Move the Gas Plant (MTGP) that opposes Sandow Lakes Energy's plan to build a natural gas power plant in the Blue community.

The meeting will be held on Monday, Dec. 16 at 10 a.m. in the District Clerk Courtroom in the District Clerk Building at 289 S. Main St. in Giddings.

The resolution was submitted to Lee County Judge Frank Malinak last August by the MTGP steering committee, which was organized in opposition to the gas plant being located in the Blue community.

Sandow Lakes Energy proposes to build a 1,200-megawatt gas power plant on Sandow Lakes Ranch property at the intersection of CR 309 and CR 312, which is within 3,000 feet of the River View Christian Academy for girls and the historic Adina Christian Church. Almost 100 homes are located within a mile-and-a-half of the proposed plant.

If the county decides to adopt MTGP's resolution, it would oppose building the gas plant in Blue, and instead request Sandow Lakes Energy locate its plant at the site of the now closed Alcoa Aluminum smelter and coal plant in Milam County. That site is also part of the 33,000-acre Sandow Lakes Ranch.

The resolution also requests Sandow Lakes Energy to abandon the proposed gas plant if it cannot relocate it from the Blue community.

Travis Brown, spokesman for MTGP, said the proposed gas plant would be among the largest such plants in Texas and would dramatically damage the rural nature of the Blue community. He said that negative impacts would include air pollution harmful to human health and a permanent decrease in property values in the Blue area.

“We urge concerned citizens of Lee County to attend this special court meeting,” Brown said.

“We are hopeful our elected county officials will do the right thing and stand up for their constituents in the Blue community.”

While the county has no authority to stop the gas plant, Brown said the resolution could help Blue residents in their legal challenge to the state air permit that Sandow Lakes Energy will have to obtain.

“It makes no sense to build this huge industrial facility in rural Blue when there is a more suitable and feasible site 15 miles away,” Brown said.

Judge Malinak has previously indicated an alternate resolution may also be in the works. “We have questioned SLR about the location and suggested it be moved deeper into their own property to shield our residents from negative effects,” he stated. “We know our citizens don’t want a power plant in their midst. I wouldn’t either, but the commissioners court does not have the authority to stop it.”

Brown believes the main reason Sandow Lakes Energy wants to build the gas plant in Blue is to be near the relatively new Matterhorn natural gas pipeline, which passes through northwest Lee County.